

Arctic and North. 2023. No. 51. Pp. 199–210

Original article

UDC 338.483(985)(045)

doi: 10.37482/issn2221-2698.2023.51.233

Prospects of Arctic Tourism in Russia in Current Conditions

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Abstract. Arctic tourism is an important mechanism for sustainable development of territories in the Far North. Russia has developed strategies for the development of Arctic tourism, which is one of the areas of international cooperation. However, the complicated relations of Russia on the international stage have endangered further successful development of tourism in the Arctic. Numerous problems of tourism development in underdeveloped territories are exacerbated by new obstacles that have caused changes in the tourism services market. The article analyzes the problems of Arctic tourism development in Russia in the context of a difficult geopolitical situation that emerged in 2022. We have identified priority issues hindering the development of Arctic tourism and predicted which of them will be the most relevant at the present stage. Based on this, possible directions for planning Arctic tourism in Russia in the regional context were proposed. In order to identify problems and justify the prospects for overcoming them, we conducted a content analysis of the reviews of tourists who visited the main tourist destinations in the Russian Arctic, and made a SWOT analysis of Arctic tourism logistics. As a result, we found that the main problem for the development of tourism in the Arctic will be the deterioration of transport accessibility due to difficulties in organizing air travel, especially in regions that do not have land-based communications with places where tourist interest is formed. Therefore, the focus in planning the development of Arctic tourism should now be given to the regions of the European sector of the Russian Arctic, the most accessible and popular among tourists.

Keywords: *Arctic, Arctic tourism in Russia, development, content analysis*

Introduction

Before the pandemic, 1.2 million tourists visited the Arctic annually. Russia ranked 4th in the number of visits (after Norway, Iceland, USA) [1, Loguntsova I.V., p. 39]. D.A. Medvedev called Arctic tourism one of the eight directions of international cooperation in the Arctic. The tourism development strategy up to 2035 was approved by a Decree of the government of the Russian Federation in 2019. The development strategy for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation provides for the development of Arctic tourism and the promotion of regional tourism clusters. As a type of economic activity, Arctic tourism is costly and takes a long time to pay back. But as a way of restructuring the economy in the Arctic regions, it is a promising direction for sustainable development, and the creation of tourism infrastructure will improve the quality of life of the local population.

Due to the high cost of Arctic tours, the discrepancy between the price and quality of the tourist product, Arctic tourism remains a non-mass destination and generates income for its or-

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For citation: Tsvetkov A.Yu. Prospects of Arctic Tourism in Russia in Current Conditions. *Arktika i Sever* [Arctic and North], 2023, no. 51, pp. 233–246. DOI: 10.37482/issn2221-2698.2023.51.233

ganizers only locally. In the current political and economic situation in Russia after February 2022, the existing problems of the development of Arctic tourism are likely to be aggravated, and its prospects are in doubt. The priorities of the tourism development strategy need to be reviewed, taking into account the newly emerging obstacles associated with the geopolitical situation. The current situation in the Arctic tourism is illustrated by the reduction in the flow of tourists in 2022, especially foreign ones. The most profitable area of Arctic tourism — cruises to the North Pole — is practically not used due to the lack of solvent foreign tourists. At the same time, the restriction of travel abroad for Russians increased their interest in domestic tourism, including Arctic routes. The Russian tourist industry has new opportunities for the development in the regions. The purpose of this work is to identify problems that will hinder or contribute to the further development of Arctic tourism in Russia in the current political and economic situation.

Materials and methods

Numerous studies that have appeared in the last few years are devoted to the Arctic tourism. These works consider the conceptual features of Arctic tourism, its motivation, resources, types, logistics, new directions are proposed, prospects are predicted [1, Loguntsova I.V.; 2, Zhelnina Z.Yu., Tereshchenko N.V.; 3, Kunnikov A.V.; 4, Lukin Yu.F.; 5, Meltsov A.V., Dracheva L.A., Savinkina L.A.; 6, Sevastyanov D.V.; 7, Timoshenko D.S., 8, Tsvetkov A.Yu.; 9, Shindina Yu.A.; 10, Heldt Cassel S., Pashkevich A.; 11, Steward E. J., Ligget D., Dawson J]. In 2022, the existing strategies for tourism development, including the Arctic one, were affected by factors unforeseen at the time of their development. Their further implementation is associated with overcoming unexpected obstacles. Studies of the influence of the new geopolitical reality on Arctic tourism began to appear in scientific publications. Thus, A.V. Meltsov, E.L. Dracheva, L.A. Savinkina believe that “complex geopolitical relations of Russia limit the development of the Arctic potential, primarily in the field of Arctic tourism” [5, p. 5]. At the same time, according to D.S. Timoshenko, Arctic tourism is a tool for reducing conflict potential and an element of civilizational development of the North [7, p. 50]. Therefore, no matter what, Arctic tourism should be developed for the benefit of humanity.

At the beginning of our work, we analyzed the situation resulting from the difficult geopolitical conditions of 2022 in terms of its impact on the development of Arctic tourism in Russia. For this purpose, we used information from the portal of the Association of tour operators of Russia on the state of domestic tourism in the past year and data on tourist arrivals from the official website of the State Statistics Committee.

In order to identify shortcomings in the organization of tourism, problems that reduce the impression of tourists from the visited destinations, we turned to the opinion of the tourists themselves. Content analysis is used as one of the tools for studying the opinions of tourists. Tourists' feedback on the popularity of attractions and problems of development of tourist centers were studied using content analysis by many authors. For example, I.A. Potapov conducted a content

analysis of tourist reviews about a small Finnish town that has become a popular tourism center, which allowed to identify the factors that influenced this process [12].

We conducted a content analysis of reviews of tourists who visited various regions of the Russian Arctic. As a source of information, we used a popular Internet review site¹. The reviews posted there represent a cross-section of tourists' opinions about the main Arctic destinations, give an idea of the greater popularity of some destinations and the "non- promotion" of others, and show the links between tourist sites and places where tourist flows to them are formed. For greater objectivity, we excluded from the analysis reviews given by local residents. Non-quantitative and quantitative types of content analysis were used. With the help of non-quantitative content analysis, we identified natural and non-natural factors that influenced the formation of qualitative characteristics of the impressions of tourists received when visiting the main places of tourist interest in the Arctic. Quantitative content analysis allowed identifying and comparing the main factors that were perceived negatively by tourists and those that were noted positively. In addition, quantitative analysis made it possible to compare the relevance of these issues in the territorial context of the Russian Arctic, to determine the most and least visited destinations and places where tourists come from. Using SWOT-analysis, we identified the main strengths and weaknesses of Arctic tourism logistics. Next, we made a conceptual forecast of the further state of the identified problems, taking into account the current political and economic situation in the country. As the destinations participating in the analysis, we chose those that are marked on the tourist portal of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation². These are the village of Teriberka, the Khibiny, the Solovetskiy Islands, Naryan-Mar, Vorkuta, Salekhard, Norilsk, Taimyr, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Chukotka. We intentionally did not take large cities for analysis (Murmansk, Arkhangelsk).

Results and discussion

In 2022, due to the difficult political and economic relations between Russia and foreign countries, a situation is emerging in which the tourism industry in the Arctic is losing a significant part of its market. Foreign tourists were the main consumers of cruise tours to the Pole. Before the COVID pandemic, in 2019, 23 cruises were made in the Arctic Ocean to the North Pole during the season, with a visit to the Franz Josef Land archipelago, and in 2022, the icebreaker "50 Let Pobedy" made only 3 voyages, of which one was for tourists, and two — as part of a youth science popularization project. The number of cruise participants decreased by more than 5 times. The reasons for this were problems of a political, legal and logistical nature, due to which foreign tourists practically stopped visiting Russia. According to the Association of tour operators of Russia, there were practically no foreign organized tourists in 2022. Single visits to Russia by foreigners for business purposes were recorded. A few tourist groups came from India, China, Philippines, Vi-

¹ Otvovik. URL: <https://otzovik.com/travel/> (accessed 06 January 2023).

² The Arctic is closer than you think. URL: <https://www.tourism.arctic-russia.ru/> (accessed 08 January 2023).

etnam, Qatar, Iran, Turkey. At the same time, the entry flow to Russia increased by 1 million people compared to 2021 (but decreased by 3.5 times compared to 2019), although this is due to non-tourist visits by citizens of Central Asian countries³.

The Russians also found themselves in a situation where it became difficult to travel abroad. Therefore, they are increasingly travelling within the country, including to the regions of the Russian Arctic. According to Rosaviatsia (Federal Air Transport Agency), in 2022, the airports of the Arctic zone of Russia served 9% more passengers than in 2021, but 10% less than before the pandemic in 2019⁴. It is difficult to single out tourists among passengers, but at the same time it indicates the growth of arrivals to the Arctic of Russians, including for tourism purposes. The open data of the Statistical Committee does not give an accurate calculation of the tourist flow. The number of arrivals, determined by the number of people in collective accommodation facilities, does not give an exact number of tourists among them. In 2022, arrivals of conditional tourists were recorded in the Arctic regions of Russia as follows: 572.949 people in the Murmansk Oblasy, 318.175 people in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, 30.068 people in the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, and 17.628 people in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. For other subjects that are part of the Arctic, statistics are given within the administrative boundaries; it does not give an idea of the number of tourists visiting the Arctic destinations. 1.492.467 arrivals were recorded in the Krasnoyarsk Krai, 617.806 people visited the Republic of Karelia in 2022, 517.315 people visited the Arkhangelsk Oblast, 435.112 people visited the Komi Republic, and 237.467 people visited the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)⁵. Therefore, it is impossible to say unequivocally about the growth of Arctic tourism, although there is interest in a direction that is new for most Russians, and this should be used before the market situation changes.

In order to make Arctic tourism attractive not only because of the exoticism, to encourage tourists to return to the Arctic, it is necessary to solve its specific problems. For this purpose, we have studied the feedback from tourists who have been on various Arctic trips, both independent and organized. Of all the variety of places of tourist interest, we focused on those that are promoted on a special tourist portal of the Arctic zone (Table 1). A total of 195 reviews were considered. In the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and Chukotka, more than half of the reviews were left by local people or people who moved from there to other regions. We excluded them from the analysis.

³ V"ezdnoy turizm v Rossiyu nakhoditsya na urovne statisticheskoy pogreshnosti [Inbound tourism to Russia is at the level of statistical error]. URL: www.atorus.ru/node/50115 (accessed 09 January 2023).

⁴ Rastet li na samom dele turpotok v arkticheskie regiony Rossii [Is the flow of tourists to the Arctic regions of Russia actually growing?]. URL: www.atorus.ru/node/50677 (accessed 10 January 2023).

⁵ Federal State Statistics Service. URL: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/storage/mediabank/turpotok-12.xlst> (accessed 06 February 2023).

Table 1

Analysis of positive and negative tourist reviews of Arctic destinations (%)

Evaluation	Solovetskiy Islands	Teriberka	Khibiny	Cruise	Naryan-Mar	Vorkuta	Salekhard	Norilsk	Taimyr	Yakutia	Chukotka
Positive evaluations											
nature, history	56	81	44	100	32	43	50	14	100	80	75
privacy	9	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
active rest	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
winter	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	33	*	*
inexpensive	*	*	41	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
service	*	*	13	*	*	*	*	14	*	*	*
not far away	*	*	11	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
people	*	*	*	*	25	*	*	*	*	50	*
Negative evaluations											
climate	22	17	44		42	57	50	71	67	70	37
ecology	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	43	33	*	*
prices	22	15	11	100	25	14	43	14	33	*	25
far away	13	13	7	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	25
infrastructure	22	49	26	*	*	14	14	*	*	30	12
devastation	5	13	*	*	*	29	*	*	*	*	*
number of reviews (%)	28	24	14	1	5.7	2	7.3	7.3	1.7	5	4

* — there are no reviews, or their number is insignificant.

First of all, the analysis of tourist reviews allows us to identify the most popular destinations in Arctic tourism. The Solovetskiy Islands in the Arkhangelsk Oblast (28% of the total number), Teriberka village in the Murmansk Oblast (24%) and Khibiny (ski center in the Murmansk Oblast, 14%) lead in the number of reviews. In general terms, the percentage of popularity of these destinations corresponds to the rating of the administrative entities on the territory of which they are located [1, Loguntsova I.V., p. 40]. The number of reviews and, consequently, the popularity of destinations decrease when moving eastwards (exceptions are Arctic cities with developed infrastructure — Salekhard, Norilsk, Naryan-Mar). This may be due to the greater remoteness and inaccessibility of destinations in the Asian sector of the Arctic for potential tourists, the insufficient development of infrastructure and the tourism industry in its regions, and fewer offers of various tours. Polar cruises are the most elite because of their high cost.

Analysis of reviews allows us to determine residents of which regions most often visit these tourist destinations. Since the portal used for the analysis is Russian-speaking, the reviews on it are mainly from tourists from Russia. The geography of tourists who left feedback indicates their preference for regions that are closer and cheaper to get to. Many places are visited by previously left citizens (“guest tourism”), which does not bring much income, since such tourists usually do not have overnight stays in hotels. Destinations in the European sector of the Russian Arctic are mainly visited by tourists from the European part of Russia, while the Asian part of the Arctic is more often visited by residents of Siberia and the Far East.

Thus, the Solovetskiy Islands are most often visited by residents of Moscow and the Moscow Oblast (38% of reviews), St. Petersburg (13%), Murmansk, Arkhangelsk (6% of reviews each). Teriberka is more often visited by tourists from St. Petersburg (22% of reviews), Moscow and the Moscow Oblast (22% of reviews), Murmansk and the Murmansk Oblast (9% of reviews). The next destination — the ski center of Khibiny (Kirovsk) — is much less popular in terms of the number of reviews left about it. It is most visited by tourists from St. Petersburg (42% of reviews), Moscow, Murmansk and the Murmansk Oblast (19% each). Ski tourism requires special training, so this center, despite the development of infrastructure and accessibility, is less visited than Teriberka and the Solovetskiy Islands.

Other destinations are significantly inferior in terms of popularity among tourists. There are no clear leaders among the centers of tourist flows formation. These are the nearest regional centers, random cities where business travelers come from. Thus, Naryan-Mar is more often visited by residents of Arkhangelsk (27% of reviews), St. Petersburg (18%). The number of reviews about Vorkuta is the same from all cities where tourists or business travelers came from. 50% of reviews about Salekhard are from residents of Moscow. Norilsk is relatively more visited by residents of St. Petersburg (13% of reviews), the number of reviews from other cities is the same. In general, 40% of reviews about Norilsk are from tourists from places in the Asian part of Russia. The situation is similar throughout Taimyr. The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is more often visited by tourists from Moscow and Novosibirsk (20% of reviews each). But 75% of tourists are from the Asian part of Russia. Chukotka is more often visited by Moscow residents (50% of reviews). Unlike Sakha (Yakutia) and Taimyr, Chukotka is more visited by tourists from the European part of Russia, despite the considerable distance and high cost of tickets. This can probably be explained by the exoticism and exclusivity of tourist destinations there, oriented to individual tourists, which further increases the cost of such a trip. The most solvent tourists inside Russia are in large cities of the European part.

Reviews of tourists show that they are most attracted to the Arctic by its beautiful nature and interesting history. Tourists in all studied destinations left more positive reviews on these characteristics. Among the advantages of Arctic tourism, some respondents also noted privacy, possibility of active rest, presence of real winter, likelihood of seeing the northern lights, etc. Many people mentioned the kindness and hospitality of the local population (especially in Naryan-Mar and Yakutia). Positive feedback on various elements of service for tourists, infrastructure was left only in cities and developed tourism centers (Khibiny, Norilsk), although some tourists left negative reviews about the Khibiny infrastructure. Of all the directions reviewed, only the Khibiny Mountains, which are close to the main places of tourist flows formation (St. Petersburg, Murmansk, Moscow) and well connected with them by regular transport routes, received positive feedback about inexpensive, logistically accessible holidays.

The most negative evaluations were given to the cold climate, unpredictable weather, polar day and night. Only the reviews of the pole cruise have no comments on the climate, but its

negative side is the high cost. In the reviews about the village of Teriberka, the main negative aspect is associated with a poorly developed infrastructure. High prices (for travel, accommodation, shopping), problems of logistics and tourist infrastructure (lack of roads, public transport, places of accommodation, catering establishments), devastation and despondency that settlements leave — these are the main negative features of a non-natural character that are noted in the reviews. The high cost is noted in reviews in all directions, but especially in Salekhard, Naryan-Mar, Taimyr, Chukotka, Solovetskiy Islands. Poor infrastructure was also noted in Yakutia, the Solovetskiy Islands, Vorkuta, Salekhard and Chukotka. Some tourists are disappointed by the devastation in Vorkuta, Teriberka, in a village on the Solovetskiy Islands. There are relatively few reviews about the remoteness of the considered directions. Most of all tourists wrote in their reviews about the remoteness of Chukotka and, strangely enough, the Khibiny, Teriberka and Solovetskiy Islands, which are closer to the places of formation of tourist flows than the other studied destinations. Most likely, this is due to the complexity of direct logistics to the Solovetskiy Islands and Teriberka. In Norilsk and Taimyr, there are many negative reviews related to the poor environmental situation of the area, the impact of large industrial enterprises on it.

Thus, according to tourists, the main problems that may be the reason for refusing to travel to the Arctic are complicated logistics, lack of roads and poor transport connectivity of objects of tourist interest, underdevelopment of services and special infrastructure for serving tourists, neglect of many settlements. At the same time, the cost of Arctic tours is high while a quality of service is low. The exotics of Arctic travels are interesting for potential tourists, but the listed negative factors prevent them from realizing these trips, although this will not be a problem for those who like “spartan amenities”. Improving transport accessibility and quality of service will attract more tourists to the Arctic, despite the fact that local climatic conditions are a problem for many of them.

Solving the problems of transport logistics of Arctic tourism and reducing the negative impact on its development requires serious attention. Not all Arctic destinations will be able to develop successfully in the current conditions precisely because of their inaccessibility to tourists.

We conducted a SWOT analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of tourism logistics for major Arctic tourism destinations. As a result, it turned out that the strengths of Arctic tourism logistics are the presence of its own icebreaker fleet, in addition, it is planned to build six new icebreakers by 2030 (although in the current economic situation this period may be postponed due to sanctions); the presence of regular transport links with the main places of formation of tourist flows in most logistical centers of Arctic tourism.

The weaknesses of the logistics of Arctic tourism are the following: the absence of land transport routes connecting some logistics centers of Arctic tourism with places of tourist flows formation (this is especially true for Chukotka, the north of Sakha (Yakutia), the north of the Krasnoyarsk Krai); the remoteness of many Arctic regions from places where tourist flows are formed; the high cost of sea transportation due to the expensive freight of icebreakers; a small number of

regular air and rail trips to Moscow and St. Petersburg as the main centers for the formation of tourist flows.

Opportunities for transport logistics are the ongoing construction of new roads (for example, roads will connect with the main territory of the country through the Republic of Komi, Nenets and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous okrugs).

Threats to the further development of transport logistics are associated with the emergence of competitors in sea cruise transportation to the Pole (a French icebreaking class liner); the exhaustion of flight resource of aircrafts and impossibility of their replacement in the present geopolitical conditions; the great dependence of transport in the Arctic on weather conditions; the complication of logistics for arrival of foreign tourists.

When planning Arctic tourism at the present stage of development, it is necessary to focus on the most accessible areas for tourists, which are already more often chosen by them to explore the Arctic, and to organize transport corridors to reach them. The main regions from which tourists most often come to these areas should be taken into account. In terms of transport accessibility for tourists from the places of formation of tourist flows, the destinations of the Russian sector of the Arctic considered in the work can be divided into three groups: accessible by road, rail and air transport (Murmansk Oblast, some Arctic regions of the Arkhangelsk Oblast and the Komi Republic), accessible mainly by rail and air transport (Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, which can be reached by road only from the south, through the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug), accessible only by air transport (Taimyr, the Arctic uluses of Yakutia, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug). Water transport should be mentioned separately. As a means of delivering tourists from places where tourist flows are formed, it can be used in places where large rivers flow, which in Russia are directed from south to north (the Ob River — the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Yenisei River — Taimyr, the Lena River — the north of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)). There are large cities along the banks of these rivers, potential places for the formation of tourist flows (Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Yakutsk), but the time of their use is limited by navigation. Water transport is best used for organizing river and sea cruises, especially since the subjects of the Arctic zone, as a rule, are located along the shores of the Arctic Ocean and its seas.

In the current geopolitical situation, Russian aviation is under threat. Most of the aircraft are foreign-made; they also have to undergo technical regulation abroad, which has become impossible since 2022. Therefore, the number of aircraft in operation is decreasing. Consequently, the problem of transport accessibility of the regions of the Arctic, which have a connection with the rest of the territory of Russia only by plane, will become an obstacle to the development of tourism there. These include the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the north of the Krasnoyarsk Krai (Taimyr), the Arctic uluses of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug.

In other Arctic regions of Russia, this problem is offset by the availability of land transport, but there is a problem of increasing travel time to places of tourist interest. For the Arkhangelsk Oblast, the situation with the reduction of operated aircrafts will be aggravated by the closure of

the main airport Talagi for reconstruction during the tourist season of 2023. Visiting settlements on the coast of the White Sea, the Solovetskiy Islands from Arkhangelsk by small aircraft is complicated by the fact that tickets are sold primarily to passengers with local residence registration, as they are subsidized from the regional budget.

Thus, the advantages that emerged in the domestic tourism market after the restriction of outbound tourism for Russians during the current political and economic situation cannot be fully realized due to problems with transport. It follows that there will be no significant breakthrough in the development of Arctic tourism in Russia in the coming years, since we cannot influence the geopolitical and logistical factors that hinder its development. A significant increase in the number of tourists in some Arctic regions should not be expected. The main emphasis in the development of Arctic tourism should be made on the creation of high-quality world-class infrastructure, the construction of roads between objects of tourist interest, the development of public transport in the regions most visited by tourists now. These are the Murmansk Oblast, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Arctic regions of the Arkhangelsk Oblast, the Republic of Karelia and the Komi Republic.

Particular attention should now be paid to the creation of tourism infrastructure in the Murmansk Oblast. The presence of objects of tourist interest, relative transport accessibility, even in the absence of basic tourist infrastructure, makes the destinations of the Murmansk Oblast popular even now. The advantages of the transport and geographical position of the Murmansk Oblast and Murmansk as an ice-free port and a major transport hub should be used for its maximum development as the main center of Arctic tourism, including cruise tourism, since the base of the Russian icebreaker fleet is located there. This region is at the same time close to the main places of formation of tourist flows within the country and in Europe, and is located not far from the North Pole.

Arkhangelsk is another major logistics hub for Arctic tourism. It is more distant from the North Pole, but is closer to the places where the country's tourist flows are formed than Murmansk. It is planned to build a railway that will connect Arkhangelsk with the regions of the Urals and Siberia ("Belkomur"). This will expand the delivery options for potential tourists.

Salekhard, the capital of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, as well as nearby Labytnangi and Vorkuta are complementary logistics centers. Their strength is the presence of two airports (Salekhard, Vorkuta), railway stations (Vorkuta, Labytnangi), and a port (Salekhard). The creation of a single cluster could make them an original Arctic tourist center, combining the directions of ethnographic and industrial tourism, which could increase the time tourists spend there.

In order to attract tourists to the Arctic, it is necessary to develop tours for various categories, create new routes that may become popular among foreign tourists in the future. This is especially true for the border areas of the Murmansk Oblast and Karelia, as well as areas of the Asian sector of the Arctic. For example, for the Murmansk Oblast, it is possible to propose the development of a tour along the historical road "Road to the Arctic Ocean", built by Finland in 1931, con-

necting the Finnish city of Rovaniemi with the former Finnish port on the Barents Sea, Linahamari. Immediately after construction, this path attracted tourists (in 1936, 14.000 people traveled along the road). In the future, this road could also be used for cross-border Arctic travel. Arctic cruises around the Chukotka Peninsula and other exclusive routes in the Asian sector of the Arctic could be developed for tourists from East and Southeast Asia, which would be visited now.

Conclusion

The geopolitical situation that has developed around Russia in 2022 has affected the development of Arctic tourism. First of all, it influenced the change in the market of tourist services consumption, from which foreign tourists, who used to be the main participants of the most expensive type of Arctic tourism — pole cruises — have been almost completely excluded. The interest of Russian tourists in the destinations of the Arctic region has intensified, which is indirectly evidenced by an increase in passenger traffic at Russian Arctic airports in 2022 by about 9–10%. However, they did not become consumers of the cruise tourism product due to the high price of tickets. As a result, the number of cruise tourists in the Arctic decreased by 5 times.

The most popular destinations for Russian tourists in the Arctic are the Murmansk Oblast, the arctic regions of the Arkhangelsk Oblast and the Republic of Karelia, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Most often, tourists visit the Solovetskiy Islands (Arkhangelsk Oblast), the village of Teriberka and the Khibiny ski center (Murmansk Oblast). Most of the tourists visiting these regions live in the European part of Russia. The main centers for the formation of tourist flows to these destinations are Moscow and the Moscow Oblast, St. Petersburg, Murmansk and Arkhangelsk oblasts. This is due to the proximity and transport accessibility of this sector of the Arctic for tourists of the European part of Russia, more developed infrastructure and a variety of tourist offers. The Arctic regions of the Asian sector are less popular with tourists due to poor transport accessibility and underdeveloped infrastructure. Basically, these directions are visited by residents of Siberia and the Far East.

The analysis of the negative reviews of tourists visiting the main Arctic destinations showed a set of standard problems inherent to tourism in underdeveloped regions. These include the lack of roads and tourist infrastructure, the high cost of importing all the goods and equipment necessary for normal life, and the complicated logistics of transporting tourists. In the current geopolitical situation, the problem of the logistics of Arctic tourism is seen as the most serious, and it becomes the main obstacle to its further development. Since the regions of the Russian Arctic are significantly remote from the main places of formation of tourist flows, the main transport for tourists is plane, especially since many regions of the Arctic have no land connections with the rest of Russia. The planes used by Russian airlines are mostly foreign-made and cannot be serviced in Russia due to economic sanctions, so the number of machines in operation will decrease, which will affect the reduction in tourist traffic and an increase in fares. It will further raise the price of expensive Arctic tourist products, resulting in a reduction in the number of tourists. This is espe-

cially true for the regions of the Arctic that can only be reached by plane (Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Taimyr, the north of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Chukotka Autonomous Okrug). When planning tourism in the Russian Arctic, it can be suggested to concentrate efforts on already operating areas that have land transport links with the main centers for the formation of tourist flows. This applies to the Murmansk Oblast, the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Arctic regions of the Republic of Karelia and the Arkhangelsk Oblast. For the rest of the Russian Arctic regions, the main directions should be the development of local tourism and the creation of tourism infrastructure. After the geopolitical situation changes, it will be easier to develop these areas on the basis of the existing infrastructure.

Thus, in modern conditions, the development of Arctic tourism in Russia will slow down due to the aggravation of logistics problems. The main promising destinations for Russian tourists will be the most transport-accessible destinations in the European part of the Russian Arctic, to which there was an increase in interest in 2022. Stimulating the tourist flow requires the improvement of local tourist infrastructure and the development of tourist offers designed for different categories.

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*The article was submitted 20.02.2023; approved after reviewing 27.02.2023;
accepted for publication 28.02.2023*

The author declares no conflicts of interests